

In re Application of VABLAIS et al.  
Serial No. 09/820,258

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**REMARKS**

The Office action has been carefully considered. Claims 1-24 are now pending. The Office action rejected claims 1-5, 8-14 and 17-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,577,299 to Schiller et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,128,828 to Herbst et al. and U.S. Patent No. 6,539,101 to Black.

Claims 6, 7, 15 and 16 were objected to as being rejected on a rejected base claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By the present amendment, claims 5, 6, 8-13 and 20-24 have been canceled, and claims 1 and 14 have been amended, to expedite allowance and not in view of the prior art. As discussed below, applicants submit that each of the remaining claims contain allowable subject matter and thus are allowable.

More particularly, the subject matter of claim 6, indicated as allowable, has been substantially incorporated into claim 1, along with the subject matter of the intervening claim, claim 5. Claims 5 and 6 have been canceled as duplicative. Claim 7, which was dependent on canceled claim 6, has been amended to be dependent on claim 1. Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 7 are allowable as indicated in the Office action.

The subject matter of claim 15, indicated as allowable, has been substantially incorporated into claim 14; (there were no intervening claims). Claim 15 has been canceled as duplicative. Claim 16, which was dependent on canceled claim 15, has been amended to be dependent on claim 14. Accordingly, claim 14

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and its dependent claims, claims 16-19, each contain allowable subject matter as indicated in the Office action.

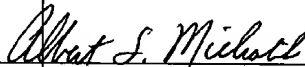
In view of the foregoing remarks, each of the pending claims 1-4, 7, 14 and 16-19 contain subject matter indicated as being allowable in the Office action. These claims are consistent with the reasons for allowable subject matter given in numbered section 5 on page 12 of the Office action, although applicants submit that the claims may be patentable for additional reasons beyond those set forth therein and thus the claims speak for themselves and should not be limited by the language in this section. A timely allowance is respectfully requested.

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### CONCLUSION

Based upon the above remarks, all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance as each contains allowable subject matter as indicated in the Office action. Applicants respectfully request timely allowance of the patent application. If in the opinion of the Examiner a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (425) 836-3030.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 3, 2004

  
Albert S. Michalik

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